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ABSTRACT

Becoming successful through positive thinking can make a person a winner throughout life. Winners are specific and positive, are prepared, and accept personal responsibility for their actions. By mentally imaging a goal, an individual can gain the confidence necessary to accomplish that goal. An individual's life can be made easier by thinking of positive moments, even in difficult situations. It is important to avoid simple, innocent reasons for putting off completing necessary tasks. Face-to-face encounters can be dealt with successfully by (1) facing criticism head-on; (2) learning to achieve success in group settings; and (3) learning effective customer service relations. Positive speaking can promote better communication socially and in the workplace. (SG)

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Winning:

A Post-Graduate Course in Succeeding in the Real World

By Duquesne University's Business and Professional Communications Class, Summer, 1990, under the direction of Lloyd E. Corder, Ph.D.

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BE A WINNER

Successful life, successful career. . .

Day in and day out, everyone strives to be a successful person or to make the best out of every day. But how do you become successful?

Becoming successful through positive thinking can make you a winner throughout your life. To obtain your ultimate goal of being a winner, you have to set and accomplish goals. Therefore, we have developed a guide to help you become a winner through a positive outlook. It is easy to make changes, if you know how. To obtain the necessary know-how, go ahead and read on . . . . .

CHARACTERIZING THE WIN

"Everybody is born with the equal chance to become just as unequal as he or she possibly can."

Charles A. Coonradt

You have an equal chance to be a winner or a loser. It is up to you to decide what you will be. Once you have decided to become a winner and have a positive outlook, it is necessary to determine what steps must be taken to accomplish this goal. In the book, **The Game of Work**, Charles A. Coonradt presents three characteristics that successful people possess. Let's examine each of these characteristics separately.

Winners Are Positive

Winners are specific and positive.

There is a difference in perception between winners and losers. Winners see a negative thing as an opportunity, but losers see a negative thing as a problem. Winners see specific items and find positive elements while losers see things in a broad sense and look at things in a generally negative light.

The following examples demonstrate the difference in perception between winners and losers:

Winners	Losers
Always part of the answer.	Always part of the problem.
See a green near every sand trap.	See two or three sand traps near every green.
See an answer for every problem.	See a problem for every answer.
Say, "It may be difficult, but it's possible."	Say, "It may be possible, but it's difficult."

Intending To Win By Being Prepared

Winners are prepared.

Winners know what they want, therefore, they are prepared for their aim and are ready to take a chance.

> The winner has a program
> The loser has an excuse

Winners organize their knowledge and experiences as a program to be used when needed. Whenever winners come across a difficult situation, it is more easily managed with this prepared resource.

Conversely, losers are not prepared for their goals, so an unexpected situation cannot be readily handled. Because they have not organized their knowledge, losers cannot use past experiences efficiently. Losers often prepare more for excuses than for their goals.

Never Hand-Off Responsibility

Winners accept personal responsibility for their actions.

In every situation, winners believe that they can obtain something beneficial from experience. Winners use "I," "me," and "our". Losers use "they," "them," and "theirs" and other non-committal words.

> The winner says "Let me do it for you"
> The loser says "That's not my job"

A positive outlook has nine principle benefits. By having a positive outlook, our lives can be improved and can be better than they already are.

1. **Perceptions Count:** Most things are not as they seem. This is often the case when we sense that an event is negative. It usually is not as bad as it seems and may actually be turned into something positive.

2. **Positive Attitude = Positive Outcomes:** Our value to others is often determined by how we see ourselves. If we have a positive self image we will most likely have a positive view of other things and others will look favorably upon us.

3. **A Great Way To Love:** Another aspect of life where having a positive outlook can be beneficial for those who follow a Christian belief system is that with an attitude of self love, it is easy to follow the command to love others as you love yourself. With a good attitude toward ourselves, other people, and other things, it is easy to live a life of real love.

4. **Jumping The Hurdles Of Life:** A positive outlook may help in overcoming our handicaps and limitations. It is possible to overcome our difficulties and become quite successful. Examples of this can be seen in people such as Beethoven, Thomas Edison, Albert Einstein, Stevie Wonder, Ronnie Milsap, and Ray Charles.

5. **Humble People Win The Respect Of Others:** To succeed we must develop a positive attitude, but at the same time, we must be willing to admit our limitations and shortcomings. This humility will win the respect of others and will make it easier for us to reach our goals.

6. **Our Personal Responsibility And Our Benefits:** Making things positive begins with each one of us. If we can develop a positive attitude, we may be able to change things. For example, nothing works better to avoid an argument than a smile. When we smile we make others feel more positive and relaxed. We also feel less burdened when we smile and relax. We feel better and so will others.

Never Hand-Off Responsibility

7. **Attitude = Asset:** The best measure of our personality is our attitude. When we have a good attitude, people will perceive that as our personality and like us better.

8. **Good Can Come From, And Will Conquer, Evil:** Bad things are often needed for good things to come about or for the good things in life to be appreciated. Aquinas said that good will always outweigh evil.

9. **Live And Enjoy A Full Life!** Finally, the greatest benefit is that a positive attitude will help us live a full, happy, and enjoyable life. What can be a greater reason than life itself?

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MAGNIFYING YOUR MIND

Can you see yourself owning a profitable organization? Making vital decisions? Investing your profits wisely? To be a winner, you must imagine far beyond that which you believe you are capable. You have to commit yourself, not only physically, but mentally to reach the goals you want to achieve.

First, you must develop the determination to accomplish tasks you never believed were possible. Once you have developed the determination, mentally visualize yourself accomplishing these goals step-by-step. And finally, practice visualizing these images over and over again.

Because your brain cannot distinguish between what is real or imagined, your mind will be conditioned to believe you have already accomplished these goals, even though they were only imagined. If you believe you can do something, that is the way you will perform. If your mental approach is positive, subconsciously you will expect more from yourself. This positive mental approach will increase your confidence level.

For example, if you imagine yourself developing a product and selling it for a tremendous profit, you will begin to believe you can accomplish this goal because in your mind you have seen yourself develop it, market it, and sell it for a significant profit.

MAGNIFYING YOUR MIND

Always remember, your mind cannot decipher the difference between what is real or imagined. Therefore, if you repeatedly imagine a positive image you will have gained the confidence to accomplish that goal.

Mental Imaging

Imaging is positive thinking carried one step further.

Imaging, the forming of mental pictures or images, is based on a principle that there is a need to become like that which we imagine or image ourselves being.

By imaging with tremendous intensity, we release forces more powerful than believed.

People find within themselves strength, power, and wisdom they had no idea they possessed.

The following are five objectives that can be solved through mental imaging.

1. Self-Esteem

The most common reason for which people see a psychiatrist is their lack of self-esteem.

When a person's self-image decreases, the result is misery.

Also, when trying to be someone else you will not feel complete or successful. NEVER FEEL INFERIOR!

Mental Imaging

To increase self-esteem,

* Examine your entire life to find the origin of your inferior feelings.

* Select a specific problem that sticks out in your mind and take action against it.

* You will always succeed even if the problem is not solved, because you will have broken the fear barrier in your mind.

2. Outwit Worry

A simple solution to a simple problem is a simple saying or phrase.

* I believe that I am always divinely guided.

* I believe that I will always take the right turn in the road.

* I believe that God will make a way where there is no way.

If the negative image is already implemented in your thoughts, there are sayings, phrases, or some key words to eliminate negativism that people will feel comfortable with, and eventually believe in. Once these positive thoughts are embedded in your mind through memorization, they will overtake the negative thoughts that already exist. When focused on something else, the problem that is being worried about will diminish.

3. Overcome Loneliness

If you are lonely, with no family or friends to fill the gaps in your life, you can change by displaying a new image. Before someone learns to like others, they must first like themselves. Learn to like yourself and then your loneliness will be overcome.

4. Health

"We are essentially minds with bodies," Lew Miller told himself. "Our minds control our bodies. If I affirm and visualize my recovery, my thoughts will steadily be forming and producing their physical counterparts."

Lew Miller was a man who overcame a life-threatening illness, by thinking about the past and eventually about the goals for his future, while he lie near death.

Mental Imaging

If people image themselves as being ill or getting ill, they will be irresponsible to their health, but in the same respect with a positive image of yourself and your health, your body will respond in a positive way.

5. Tension

Tension can be eliminated in two ways,

* Physical release of tension - through muscle relaxation

* Mind release of tension - by imaging

If you imagine yourself in a place that would make you feel comfortable and relaxed, then you can feel your body in another place away from the immediate problems.

Imaging in everyday life can help you be positive in every situation. The previous examples are all major objectives, but in a normal day when something strikes you as negative, turn the negative thought into something positive. By imaging you can either change or escape the occurrence in your mind.

All of these imaging tools and techniques can be very important in everyday life, but the most important and long term successful image will be of yourself. If your self-image is negative then you will be negative. If it is positive then you will be positive.

Internal Perceptions

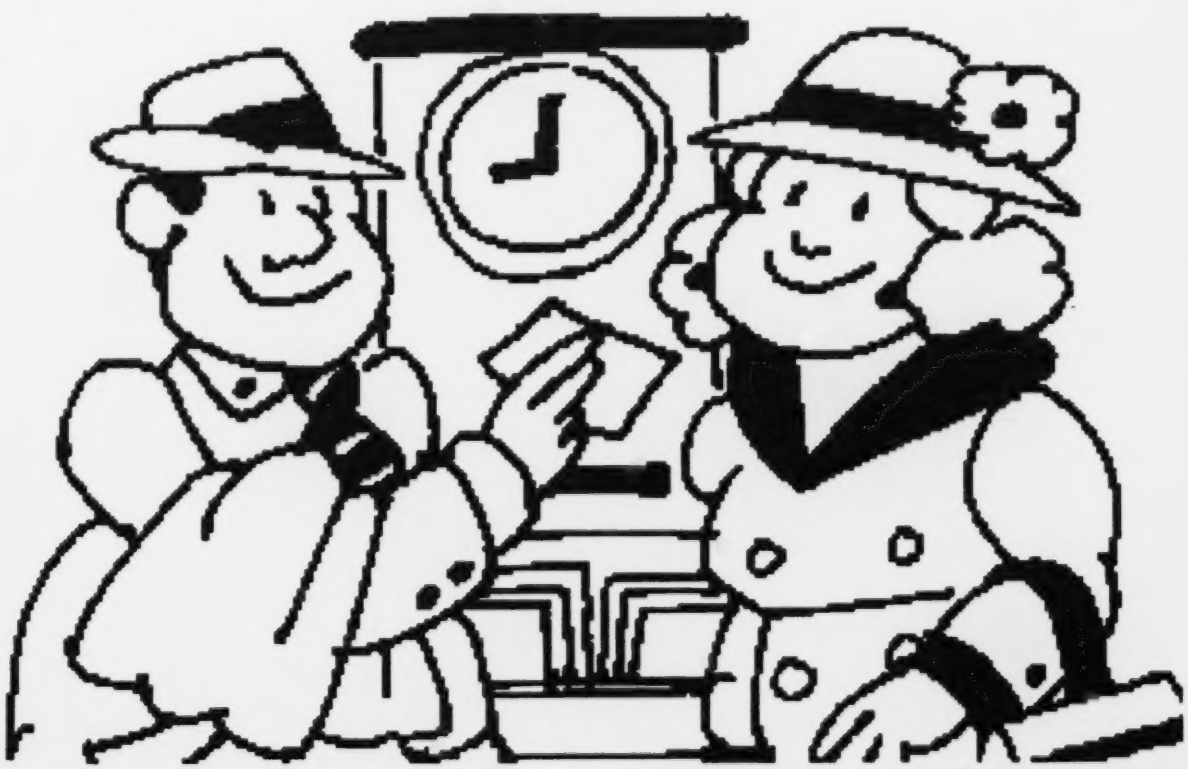
We can make our lives easier if we can think of positive moments, even in the difficult situations which occur in our daily lives. Our perceptions affect the results to a great degree.

Personal perception	Positive Response
"I can't do it!"	Study and think of positive outcomes.
"They don't care!"	Ask "them" and convey your perception. This usually results in a totally different response from the perceived.
"I'll never get a different job!"	Improve your work and communication skills.
Personal relationships don't live up to expectations	Accept the person for who they are. You do not and cannot control other people's behavior.

Internal Perceptions

"If only I had:"

* More money	Be realistic and thankful. The more you have, the more you want.
* Better physical attributes	Remember, like family, they cannot be changed but slightly modified.
* More time	Organize and set realistic goals.



No More Cop-Outs!

It's dangerously easy to come up with simple, innocent reasons to put off doing a necessary task until later. Most people do not realize, however, that lurking behind these reasons are unseen hazards, traps, and even monsters just waiting for a chance to leap out and attack unsuspecting prey.

Here are the top 10 reasons for procrastinating....unmasked.

10. **"It's unpleasant and difficult."**

    Most difficult, unpleasant tasks start out like you or me--not so bad at first but with a little time to grow, they get bigger and worse. Do not let a difficult job get worse; get it off your conscience and list of "things to do" by doing it now.

9. **"It's not due yet."**

    Right! So now you have an opportunity instead of a problem. A chance to plan the job right, to work at your own pace, to be in control, and to show yourself (and your boss, friends, customers, family...) you are a motivated self-starter.

No More Cop-Outs!

8. **"It might hurt."**

   Ever had a root canal? Well, that is because you put off getting that small cavity filled. Enough said.

7. **"I don't know how to do it."**

   This is a rare case where tackling the job right away might lead to more confusion and disorder than less. That is no excuse for procrastinating, though. Either find out how to do it or give the job to someone who can.

6. **"Before starting, I think I'll take a break."**

   Would you give a dog a bone and then try to teach him to beg? To be effective, reinforcement must come after the behavior, not before. Why not save that break for a reward after the job is done? Or if it is a large, complicated task, save it until you have at least broken some ground on it.

No More Cop-Outs!

5. **"The job is so big, I don't know where to start."**

   Break down the job on paper into as many small steps as you can. A huge task looks less intimidating when you see it as a series of smaller ones. Keep your list and use it as a plan or flow chart to direct your efforts.

4. **"It needs further study."**

   Maybe. But forge ahead on the basis of what you already know. If you can complete the preliminary steps while the rest of the information is being gathered, you have the job underway.

3. **"I work better under pressure."**

   That's no reason to wait until there is little time left to start a job. Give yourself a deadline if necessary. Create some pressure.

No More Cop-Outs!

2. **"I'm too busy."**

   It is tempting to fill your time with trivial tasks to justify setting aside a larger one. Compare the importance of the task you are putting off and the one you are doing instead.

1. **"It's too late."**

   Can't argue with that. But think of how you got into that situation - you probably used one of the other nine cop-outs!

Direct Quotes For Positive Minds

Here are the experts' ways of becoming positive.

The Power of Positive Thinking
Norman Vincent Peale

"Believe in yourself! Have faith in yourself! Without a humble but reasonable confidence in your own powers you cannot be successful."

"Affirm it, visualize it, believe it, and it will actualize itself.

"How we think we feel has a definite effect on how we actually feel physically."

"You only lose energy when life becomes dull in your mind. The more you lose yourself in something bigger than yourself, the more energy you will have."

"Who decides whether you shall be happy or unhappy? You do!"

"Expect the best and not the worst, and you will attain your heart's desire."

"An effective method for making your mind positive in character is to eliminate certain expressions of thought and speech which we may call 'little negatives'...if many 'little negatives' clutter up your conversation they are bound to seep into your mind...the best way to eliminate them is to deliberately say a positive word about everything."

Direct Quotes For Positive Minds

Dr. Karl Menninger

"Attitudes are more important than facts."

Lewis Timberlake

"Every achievement comes from a progression of small achievements. You eat a meal one bite at a time and read a book one page at a time. Your attitude, not your aptitude, determines your altitude."

"Instead of saying, 'I can't do anything right', say, 'I can do better', or, 'I need to be more careful'."

Sigmund Freud

"Unless your personality has love, it sickens and dies."

HANDLING FACE-TO-FACE ENCOUNTERS

There are times in everyone's life when we are faced with hardships due to misunderstandings. We need to overcome these barriers and triumph in new and exciting relationships. How is this done? By changing critical communication moments into productive, meaningful, monumental occasions.

Facing Criticism Head-On

Everyone encounters the critical type in daily life. Here are a few tips to overcome those words of injury.

1. **Look Behind the Insult:** Not every criticism is meant for you. Find out what is really bothering the critic.

2. **Analyze the Remark:** Look for hidden meanings.

3. **Confront the Critic:** Discover why they would want to attack or hurt your feelings.

4. **Use Humor:** Use comebacks with humor to offset words that hurt.

5. **Use Signals:** Have signals between friends or significant others to identify when critical remarks have been made.

6. **Brush It Off or Ignore It:** Remember, everyone has bad days. Put some criticisms aside as the critic having "one of those days."

Achieving Success in a Group

When dealing with more than one person, as in a group setting, there are a few more things to be aware of. You will encounter five basic types of people:

1. **The Overtalker:** Assign this person busy work. Have them take notes, and allow them a brief discussion period at the end of the session.

2. **The Misinformed:** If this person makes an incorrect statement, say, "I see your point, but we can reconcile that with. . . ."

3. **The Poor Communicator:** This person does not convey his ideas clearly. Avoid overriding the statement with, "What you mean is. . . ." Instead try, "Did everyone hear that Mr. X said. . .," then summarize the statement.

4. **The Rebel:** This person disagrees with everyone and suffocates the creativity of the group. To handle this person, give him the spotlight, briefly, and allow the group to move on.

5. **The Non-Participant:** This person seems uninterested in the subject matter. Try drawing them into the crowd. Ask them a direct question such as, "How do you feel about. . . ."

Learn from the mistakes of others. You can never live long enough to make every mistake yourself.

Customer Service Relations

Making the customer-employee interaction easier is always a plus. Here are a few helpful hints:

DON'T	DO
Say, "May I help you?" This is too broad - get to the point!	Say, "May I show some of the features of this product?" This is more specific.
Ignore or mispronounce a customer's name. This makes the customer feel unimportant.	Address the customer by name. This adds a personal touch and makes the customer feel important.
Cut a customer off while he is speaking. This is rude.	Listen rather than become an overpowering speaker. This shows your interest in what the customer has to say.
Say "Will that be all?" This closes the customer's mind to buying anything else.	Say, "Will there be anything else?" This forces the customer to think if they forgot anything.

Easy Tips to Better Customer Relations

Enhancing your working relationship with others never hurts. Follow these rules for a healthier atmosphere.

1. When dealing with a customer, appear alive and enthusiastic about your job. Also speak loud and clear.

2. Do not take customer complaints personally. Thank him for pointing out the problem/defect so that it can be improved for future customers.

3. Do not argue over who is right or wrong, just get the problem solved.

4. To make a positive impression after a sale, do follow-up work, such as letters, phone calls, or inquiries concerning the product's performance or customer satisfaction.

PROMOTING SUCCESS THROUGH POSITIVE SPEAKING

Speaking positively can promote better communication socially and in the workplace. Combining the proper attitude with the right words will help you succeed in getting the message you intended across to your audience.

Success From A to Z

Following these rules to the letter will ensure success.

Arrive early for every appointment.

Be enthusiastic - about everything you do.

Complete every task.

Do a little bit more than is required.

Express yourself after you know the facts.

Feel comfortable in every situation by being yourself.

Go all out to please your friends and customers.

Help your co-workers.

Identify yourself by accomplishment rather than words.

Join in and help when you're needed.

Keep your head - it may save your hide.

Listen with your ears, not your mouth.

Success From A to Z

Make do with what you have.

Never say never.

Open your heart to those less fortunate than you.

Please yourself by pleasing others.

Quickly respond to an emergency.

Remember the spirit of Christmas - especially in August.

Study, study, study to excel.

Take advantage of opportunity.

Use spare time intelligently.

Value your health.

Work at your work.

X-out any qualities that could lead to failure.

You are the most important asset.

Zestfully meet any challenge.

Promoting a Positive Work Relationship

Take charge of your attitude, turn negatives into positives.

Negative	Positive
Compete with other work groups.	Cooperate with other work groups.
Concentrate only on your tasks.	Help others complete their tasks.
Share information only when it benefits you.	Share information to help the organization make better decisions.
Keep things the same. Don't try to change them.	Make changes. Always try to improve.
Discourage new ideas.	Encourage new ideas.
Don't rock the boat.	Try new ways of doing things.
Don't go outside the chain of command.	Feel free to communicate with anyone.
Resist putting new ideas into practice.	Help others put new ideas into practice.
Meet production quotas and deadlines; focus on quantity.	Do it right the first time; focus on service, quality, and customer satisfaction.

Effective Telephone Communication

Use these telephone tips to promote positive customer relations.

1. Answer on the first ring.
2. Maintain a friendly telephone personality.
3. Pay attention to your tone of voice.
4. Keep all items out of your mouth while talking.
5. Maintain a stress-free voice.
6. Greet the caller with your name, company name, and the department in which you work.
7. Identify the purpose of the call.
8. Avoid transferring caller more than once.
9. Ask permission before you place the caller on hold.
10. Always return to the person on hold within three minutes, even to ask them to continue holding.
11. Give yourself a realistic amount of time to return the call.
12. An active listener will encourage customers to explain the problem more readily.
13. Note names, dates, questions, and complaints during the conversation.
14. Defuse angry callers.
    * Project an "I care" attitude.
    * Empathize to validate the caller's feelings.
    * Clarify, reword the problem to ensure your understanding of the caller's anger.
    * Solve the problem.
    * End the conversation on an upbeat note.
    * If a return call is necessary to solve the problem, call back when you said you would, even if you still don't have the answer.

Attitudes of Successful People

Success begins with the right attitude. Following these simple rules can put you on the right tract toward achieving your goals.

* Demonstrate a willingness to comply with company policy.

* Show a willingness to provide a full day's work.

* Have strong goal orientation.

* Promote a team approach for problem solving.

* Demonstrate a willingness to accept challenges.

* Project a strong desire/capacity to exercise more freedom and discretion in how the job is done.

* Practice pleasant and respectful communication.

Attitudes of Successful People

* Provide a willingness to work toward industry designations.

* Appreciate the need to maintain confidentiality.

* Possess a desire to do quality work.

* Demonstrate a willingness to work long hours.

* Strive to be recognized for results.

* Acknowledge the importance of customer satisfaction.

* Understand that improvement in customer service is possible and desired.

* Maintain an open door policy.

* Recognize problems and find positive solutions.

* Maintain good informal communication networks.

Keep Out Negative Words

Here is a list of words to avoid because of their negative connotations. Make sure your vocabulary matches your positive attitude. Speak for success!

allege
blame
cannot
cheap
complaint
argument
ignorant
careless
contend
dispute
disagree
evict
fail
fraud
impossible
unfortunate
loss
neglect
never
ruin
unfair
unsatisfactory
error
lack

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